

What gets in the way?

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? One of the most famous of scriptural questions. What answer would you give?

Anything at all might well be the culprit, tasked with dividing us from the love of God, be that deliberate or otherwise. In our times it might well be the cynicism that believes nothing can improve life other than our own attainment of what we want. It could be the twenty first century expectation to have everything now, or as quickly as possible. It might be our own doubts that our prayers are being heard. That's despite research suggesting that those who pray regularly have a better well-being. To return to the Apostle Paul, whose writing I began with, he goes further suggesting that anything at all can hinder our walk with God. Anything mortal or spiritual is capable of hindering the love of God from being experienced.

When I felt God drawing me to himself some thirty years ago it was practicalities which hindered me. Playing for a football team every Sunday morning was the hindrance. Only when circumstance prevented me from playing regularly did I experience the worship and teaching, which amongst other things, led me forward. Oh and I did manage to keep playing, for a while, at other times. God is good.

Anything at all, might be the thing that prevents us from facing regularly towards God this week. It all comes down to priorities. Making time to pray and doing it often is the key to receiving the Holy Spirit. It is not that God comes and goes but that we sometimes do. And the truth is that we don't do it in our own strength, it's a two way relationship. As we sometimes hear in our worship; 'Come close to God and he will come close to you'. Jesus has set the ultimate example to follow and Paul encourages us in this with his concluding words in the passage referred to (Romans 8. 31 – end).

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

